

Monthly Report for October 2014

Date: November 5, 2014

To: USAID/Jordan: Talar Karakashian; George Kara'a; Arwa Ghanma

From: Lydia Cordes, FHI 360; CC: B. Singer, P. Shehata, F. Abouzeid, V. Yashkov

NOTE: Activity names under each component below have been realigned to reflect the proposed activities outlined in the Year II work plan.

Component I: Sub-Awards In Support Of Jordanian Civil Society Initiatives

- ***Activity I.A. DRG Grants:*** Phenix continued research and in parallel is establishing a unit for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and another for gender. CDFJ conducted field research with state institutions to assess compliance with the access to information law. HCAC held its first advisory committee meeting whereby it clarified its plans to build on existing standards for all stakeholders to use. IRC continued its literature reviews as planned, but faced a challenge in securing a response from the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) to interview staff. SIGI held its first advisory committee meeting on technical issues.
- ***Activity I.B. Partnerships for Jordan's Development (PJD):*** Schema struggled this month with securing private-sector commitments for the pilot phase in Zarqa, requiring it to postpone the planned session and instead continue recruitment. Gauging this as an indicator for other governorates, Schema proposed alternatives to FHI 360 for the national rollout of the project. It was agreed that Schema will focus on fewer governorates in order to have more time with CSOs and private sector companies to build buy-in for the concepts of corporate social responsibility and shared value. Schema will submit a revised work plan for FHI 360 consideration.
- ***Activity I.C. CIS APS:*** A total of five awards were issued this month to Round 1 applicants while due diligence continued with others, including an additional six from the 13 medium applicants that scored between 60-69. With AOR concurrence, FHI 360 proceeded with these six and dropped the remaining as the viability of proposed initiatives were questionable. Informal groups - Ahl Al Azem, Invest in Trash, Forest Protection – began implementation of their in-kind grants, and individual grantee orientation meetings were held with each. FHI 360 staff observed selected events organized by other grantees, and consultations took place with others to assess gender-related issues and define technical interventions to ensure gender equality, as required.
All 310 applications for Round 2 were uploaded to the Knowledge Management System, and the review of the 261 eligible applications continued, with 30 out of 31 small applications moving on to GEC review. Out of the 563 applications submitted for Rounds 1 and 2, a total of 455 unique organizations (R1: 183 & R2: 272) applied, out of which only 44 have been previous USAID IP subawardees (as listed in the USAID Subaward Tracking System). This is a testament to CIS's efforts to attract new organizations from across the Kingdom.
- ***Activity I.D. Supporting Healthy Learning Environments Grants:*** FHI 360 met with members of USAID's education office who provided new guidance on the RFA, shifting to a focus for supporting CBOs at the local level to pilot new, creativity and innovative ideas to combatting school violence.
- ***Activity I.E. Inclusive Development/Disability Rights Grants:*** No activity took place this quarter.
- ***Activity I.F. Enhancing the Effectiveness of Grantees and Highlighting Grantee Impact:*** FHI 360 began designing its first "all grantee" workshop to take place in early December. The session will provide a platform for networking and collaboration among CIS and DRG grantees as well as PJD and ISC subcontractors.

Component II: Capacity Building for Sustainability

- ***Activity II.A. Targeted Technical Assistance to USG-Subawardees:*** Coordination with other USAID IPs took place to define capacity building requirements for their stakeholders, including the Jordan Competitiveness Project (JCP) and Community Engagement Project (CEP), resulting in plans to deliver customized training for each IP's stakeholders on proposal writing and project management, respectively. Brainstorming took place to design a new course - "Essentials of Strategic Communications Planning for CSO Projects" - with participation from USAID Takamol's senior communications specialist who had previously designed courses under CSP.
FHI 360 completed ICAT assessments with the seven DRG grantees and held one-on-one sessions with each to review their scoring, after which customized reports will be compiled for each based on the template piloted for the Al Hayat report. Based on the piloting phase of the tool with DRG grantees, FHI 360 amended selected sections of the tool related to the role of boards and human resource management.
- ***Activity II.B. Institutional Strengthening Fund APS (ISF):*** The GEC met to evaluate eight eligible applications, seven of which had been submitted in September, in addition to a previous applicant which the GEC had agreed to re-consider at a later stage. Two were shortlisted – Health and Development Alliance and Rasheed for Integrity and Transparency – both of which are new to USAID support. Due diligence with the previous month's shortlisted candidate Jordan Green Building Council took place. Recent efforts to market the ISF resulted in an increased number of qualified applications for September; ironically none applied by the October 31 deadline.

- **Activity II.C: Internal Strengthening for Change (ISC):** TOT sessions were held with ISC trainers on the updated Societies Toolkit curricula as well as the new strategic planning curriculum for CBOs, both of which were jointly designed by FHI 360 and its subcontractors JRF and NHF. Round 1 of the ISC continued with a total of 44 CSOs applying for the strategic planning phase, out of which 27 were selected from Aqaba, Tafileh, Karak, Irbid, Zarqa, and Amman governorates. The selection process was based on the criteria set for this phase as well as on the interest and commitment of CSOs during IDAs sessions. All subs are meeting their targets for Round 1.

Round 2 of the ISC is in full force with sub JRF, NHF and Al Thoria holding 11 orientation sessions in Amman, Madaba, and Balqa governorates, with a total of 247 individuals representing 144 CSOs attending the orientation. Subsequently, NHF and Al Thoria conducted nine toolkit trainings in Balqa & Amman governorates, with 90 CSOs participating with additional sessions planned by all three subcontractors.

- **Activity II.D: Demand-Driven Off-the-Shelf Courses:** “Project Design & Proposal Writing for CBOs” courses were conducted in Ajloun and Ma’an, with 17 and 9 participants, respectively, committing to the mentoring component. Recruitment continued for the next session in Madaba, and plans to rollout the course to the remaining nine governorates began with a target to complete all prior to the CIS APS deadline (2/28/15).
- **Activity II.E: Intermediary Support Organization Sustainability/CSO Service Provision:** The M&E Training of Trainers continued with four out of eight selected candidates delivering on-the-job training for a total of 25 participants from 17 organizations (5 of which are JCP stakeholders). FHI 360’s senior M&E advisor monitored trainer performance for certification. FHI 360 began planning a customized session to take place in December in response to requests from USAID IPs and other IPs interested in the M&E TOT opportunity.

Component III: Enhancing Government-CSO Engagement

- **Activity III.A: Enhancing the Capacities of Registry & GOJ Civil Society Staff:** Subcontractor Enconsult continued work on the cost-benefit analysis using data from the Registry’s Association Information System (AIS). Oral presentations to the GEC, including the Registry SG, were held with the three top-listed applicants for the Registry Strategic Planning RFP, after which ABCD Consulting emerged as the apparently successful applicant and moving to due diligence. FHI 360’s legal consultant began research on government supervision of CSOs per the Law on Societies 2008 and the law governing not-for-profit companies under the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The Minister of Social Development requested additional support from USAID who then asked FHI 360 to design new program interventions to: assess AIS connectivity to ensure relevant ministries and field directorates can access the system; design a customized capacity building program for grantees of the Registry’s Fund for Societies and MoSD to “graduate” them to other donors; develop an accreditation standard for charitable organizations; and support MoSD in developing a government strategy for civil society. In response to a USAID request, FHI 360 engaged the International Center for Non-Profit Law to conduct a comparative study of best practices related to civil society laws from the US, Europe, and the MENA region.
- **Activity III.B: Civil Society Research Fund:** No activity scheduled.
- **Activity III.C: Technical Assistance Support to the Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities (HCD):** FHI 360 and HCD worked together to design a study tour to Washington on disability policy making, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms in coordination with USAID’s coordinator for disability and inclusive development. In response to updates from USAID on visa requirements, the tour dates shifted to January 2015.

Cross-Cutting Initiatives

- **Activity IV.A. KMS:** Provided support to IPs as needed. Awaiting USAID staff feedback to determine next steps.
- **Activity IV.B. Coordination:** Continued efforts with other IPs (JCP, Takamol, CEP, PAP and its spin-off Jordan Social Marketing Center). Attended LENS launch event. Met MEPI Jordan staff and MEPI Regional Director to ensure no duplication of effort in grantmaking. Participated in the USAID Sustainability Index scoring session for Jordan 2013. Co-hosted democracy implementers as part of Democracy Reporting International’s efforts to map local governance-civil society initiatives. Met Financial Services Volunteer Corps to explore possible synergies.
- **Activity IV.C. Gender, Inclusion & Environment:** Convened first gender focal point meeting for DRG to assess capacity building needs; priorities emerged to deepen their understanding of gender concepts, to equip them with gender analysis tools, to articulate arguments for gender inclusion and to deal with resistance they face internally.
- **Activity IV.D. M&E:** Provided ongoing support to grantees.

Next Month

- Ongoing/TBC: Continue due diligence/award for CIS APS grants; continue review of Round 2 applications; hold GECs; conduct ICATs; hold IP coordination meeting on assessment tools
- Nov 11-13 (Madaba): Proposal Writing & Project Design Workshop; Mentoring for Ajloun/Ma’an CBOs
- Nov 22-24 & 25-27: Organizational M&E Fundamentals Workshop Part B as part of M&E TOT Certification
- TBC: Workshop for DRG Gender Focal Points